

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1284
By Hargrove

A RESOLUTION to honor the citizens of Cookeville, Tennessee
on the occasion of the city's 150th anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause in its deliberations to join with the citizens of the towns and cities of our State as they celebrate historic events in the lives of their communities; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Cookeville, in Putnam County, are most assuredly deserving of special recognition as they prepare to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of their community; and

WHEREAS, Putnam County was established by an Act of this Body on February 11, 1854, which specified that the "county town" be named "Cookeville" in honor of Richard F. Cooke, who served in the Tennessee Senate from 1851 to 1854; and

WHEREAS, first incorporated as a city in 1856, the City of Cookeville was a "small village of three or four hundred inhabitants" for its first decade, including among its original settlers, Major J.C. Freeze, Captain H.H. Dillard and Dr. William Baker; and

WHEREAS, the first Register of Putnam County, Dr. Baker was also the publisher of the first newspaper in the city, *The Cookeville Times*, which he operated until 1860; upon his return to Cookeville in 1895, Dr. Baker described the town as being comprised of "1,500 inhabitants, many of them prominent citizens and leading men in their lines of business and professions"; and

WHEREAS, with the arrival of the railroad in the early 1880s, the City of Cookeville grew at a rapid pace; in 1895 Dr. Baker stated that the town consisted of "a dozen or fifteen business houses, a neat courthouse, five churches, four schools, four hotels, one weekly paper, and several manufactories – roller grist mill, saw mill, two planing mills, one tan yard, with extensive lumber yards"; and

WHEREAS, in 1879 the citizens of Cookeville, during a wave of Prohibitionism sweeping the nation, voted to unincorporate their town due to a quirk in state law that only allowed towns in Tennessee to sell liquor; in 1903 the “Four Mile Law,” which prohibited the sale of alcohol within four miles of a rural school, was expanded to include towns; and

WHEREAS, in the Spring of 1903, the citizens of Cookeville voted 104 to 2 to incorporate their town once again, with final action from the State Capitol taking place on April 15, 1903; and

WHEREAS, in 1915 the Tennessee General Assembly created a state technical school in Cookeville, Tennessee Polytechnic Institute, with financial assistance from Cookeville and Putnam County, that would be a “first class institution for technical education”; and

WHEREAS, during the 1930s the population of Cookeville grew rapidly, numbering over 3,725; the first movie theatre, the Princess Theater, opened in 1935 and the first radio station, WHUB, went on the air in 1939; both businesses were operated with electrical power supplied by a dam at Burgess Falls; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of Cookeville proudly celebrated their Centennial in 1954 with special postal cancellations proclaiming, “1854 – Centennial – 1954, Cookeville, Tennessee, 100 Years of Progress.”; and

WHEREAS, 1955 saw the first coin-operated telephone arrive in Cookeville, and the preliminary planning and development of future Interstate Highway 40 by the Tennessee Department of Transportation occurred just south of town; and

WHEREAS, on June 20, 1961, after nearly 50 years under the city commission form of government, Cookeville switched to the city council – city manager form; in 1964 plans were approved for a new city hall on the grounds of the Old City School on Broad Street; and

WHEREAS, in 1965, Tennessee Polytechnic Institute was renamed Tennessee Technological University and established a record enrollment of over 5,000 students that fall, in addition to beginning construction on a new football stadium; and

WHEREAS, the 1970s saw the construction of a new Putnam County Library on Broad Street and the Hooper-Eblen Center on the Tennessee Tech campus, in addition to the arrival of the Porelon plant and the first McDonald’s; and

WHEREAS, the 1980s brought the establishment of the School of Nursing at Tennessee Tech, the opening of Burgess Falls Natural Area, and the hiring of the first female police officer on the Cookeville Police force, Patrol Officer Pamela Watts; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, the American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association named Cookeville as the most economical of over 250 affordable places to live in the United States; and

WHEREAS, during the 1990s the citizens of Cookeville enjoyed the establishment of a new city park at Old City Lake and proudly watched the Olympic Torch being carried through their hometown during its journey to Atlanta for the Opening Ceremony of the 1996 Summer Olympics; and

WHEREAS, Cookeville enjoyed an economic boom in the early 1990s with the passage of a liquor-by-the-drink referendum that quickly saw the establishment of numerous chain restaurants on "Restaurant Row"; and

WHEREAS, Cookeville continues its role as the economic hub of the Upper Cumberland region; in 2002, retail sales in Putnam County reached \$885.6 million; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor this dynamic municipality and its citizenry as they commemorate this significant milestone in the history of their city; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate the citizens and elected officials of the City of Cookeville as they celebrate the sesquicentennial of their city's founding.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we offer them our heartiest wishes for prosperity and success in the next and subsequent centuries.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.